ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An automatic method and apparatus for providing services on a computer system. A set of services is established providing different functionality for the computer system. With each of the set of services an attribute is stored for

5   identifying characteristics of the function of each of the set of services. Then, the first set of services can be retrieved by a first set of attributes which is specified irrespective of any locales which may be defined in the computer system. Thus, characteristics or attributes of most importance to a service may be used to describe it and used for retrieval of such services. The establishing of the first set of services

10   includes building a structure which references each of the first set of services. Retrieving may include maintaining a reference to one of the services in the structure and iterating through the structure in order to retrieve a subsequent one of the services. An iterator may be created which is used to iterate though the database of services and provide the services to application or system programs.